Volume 3, Issue 31   Atari Online News, Etc.   August 3, 2001

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Visit the Atari Advantage Forum on Delphi!
http://forums.delphi.com/m/main.asp?sigdir=atari

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->From the Editor's Keyboard   "Saying it like it is!"
  """"""""""""""""""""""""""""

The first week back from vacation is always the toughest - ask Joe next
week! I'm still trying to find my desk from under all the accumulated
paperwork! I think I'm almost caught up and ready to resume my "normal"
routine, after a week! I admit it, I'm ready for another vacation! Alas,
it won't happen for a few more weeks. I can just hear Joe, somewhere,
uttering: "Awwwwwwwww!!!" <grin>

As I mentioned last week, I did have a couple of topics that I had wanted to
really rip into, but not this week. I'd rather complain about something
different this week. I don't usually complain about the services that the
online service provide, or not - for whatever reason. But, I am going to
take a few minutes of your time to do so. I've been a member of all the
major players over the years: Delphi, CompuServe, and GEnie. I dumped GEnie
ages ago. CompuServe has gone through many changes over the years,
including being taken over by AOL/Time Warner. Other than the loss of its
text services, CompuServe remained pretty much the same and there was no
disruption of services.

Delphi, on the other hand, has gone through many changes also, but not with
the same smooth transitions. If you're reading this and wondering what
happened to last week's online version - Delphi happened to it. Or more
specifically, Delphi DIDN'T happen! Delphi is undergoing a number of
changes - a new service plan called DelphiPlus, among other things. They're
also in the process of moving/changing servers. Early last week, those
changes began. Member web pages were not placed on the new servers, so the
A-ONE download page was inaccessible. I also couldn't access Delphi's FTP
service to update the pages with the current issue. Using alternative FTP
access would not have mattered. This week, the web pages are back, but FTP
access has still not been restored. Amazing. Almost two weeks and a
primary function of the service isn't working. And we're now paying for
this service. The cost is minimum, but that's not the point. It would seem
logical to me that before you roll out a new service that is fee-based, you
make sure that everything works first! Granted, there will always be the
inevitable minor glitches, but give me a break! Even the sign-up process
was a disaster! You fill out an online form to register (and submit payment
information). Submit. The form tells you the process is almost immediate.
Happen to hit the Submit button again? You get charged again! I got my
credit card statement and was charged FIVE times! Granted, I did get
impatient ONCE and hit the Submit button a second time - but not for a total
of five times! Yes, Delphi has been notified and claims to have taken care

of my charges. We'll see.

So, I checked earlier this evening to see if FTP access was restored; it has
not. Knowing Delphi's history, the problem will sit unresolved over the
weekend. Not a very good way to begin a new pay service.

Until next time...

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->A-ONE User Group Notes! - Meetings, Shows, and Info!
  """""""""""""""""""""""""

                    Vintage Computer Festival 5.0
                     September 15th and 16th, 2001
              Parkside Hall - San Jose Convention Center
                         San Jose, California
                    http://www.vintage.org/2001/main/

Mark your calendar! The fifth annual Vintage Computer Festival is
scheduled for the weekend of September 15th and 16th at Parkside Hall
in San Jose, California.

The Vintage Computer Festival is a celebration of computers and their
history. The event features speakers, a vintage computer exhibition,
and a vintage computer marketplace. We showcase all different types
of computers for all different kinds of platforms in all different
shapes and sizes.

EXHIBIT YOUR VINTAGE COMPUTER

Vintage Computer Collectors: we want you! Exhibit your favorite
computer in the Vintage Computer Exhibition. First, Second and
Third place prizes will be awarded in 13 categories, including the
coveted Best of Show.

For complete details on the VCF 5.0 Exhibition, visit:

http://www.vintage.org/2001/main/exhibit.php

BUY/SELL/TRADE AT THE VINTAGE COMPUTER MARKETPLACE

Do you have some vintage computer items you'd like to sell? Whether
you rent a booth or sell on consignment, the Vintage Computer Festival
Marketplace is the premier venue for selling old computers and
related items. If you would like to rent a booth or inquire about
consignment rates, please send e-mail to <vendor@vintage.org> for more
information or visit:

http://www.vintage.org/2001/main/vendor.php

TELL A FRIEND! TELL A FRIEND! TELL A FRIEND!

We really hope to see you at the VCF 5.0! And remember, tell your
friends!!

A printable flyer in Word format can be downloaded here:

http://www.vintage.org/2001/main/vcf50.doc

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                        PEOPLE ARE TALKING
                      compiled by Joe Mirando
                         joe@atarinews.org

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. Well, my vacation is just about over. I
didn't get as much done as I had hoped, but that's kind of what a vacation
is, right?

I did get a little bit of work done on a web page or two, and I made some
progress on the mirror for the telescope I'm making. That's about it.

I remember a time when vacation meant going somewhere for a week or so... a
cottage at the beach or camping in the mountains or something like that...
but these days I'm content to just be able to take it easy for a while.
Vacation is now a state of mind more than anything else. Being able to
sleep late is nice, but more importantly, I've got a little bit of time to
get my mind in order and take stock of where I am.

Vacation has also given me a little bit of time to catch up with old
friends. There are still a few that I haven't had time to catch up with
(are you reading this, Ale?), but I sincerely hope to get emails out to
them soon.

It's amazing to me that I used to say, "Who needs two weeks of vacation all at

once"?

Now, I only take one week at a time (after 23 years, I'm allowed three weeks of

vacation per year), and I miss that extra week. I don't want to think about
whether it's a sign of increasing maturity or just increasing age.... and
they're NOT the same thing.... trust me.

Well, let's get on with the news, hints, tips, and assorted STuff available
from the UseNet.

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup
====================

When someone posts:

"Both WinSTon and STeem play happily from your hard drive without any disk
images at all. SainT only runs disk images."

Gregory George replies:

"Interesting. I can't get WinSTon to read the data on my PC hard drive at
all. I must be missing something."

'Troed' tells Gregory:

"Don't put a disk image in drive A: - that's it.

What version of WinSTon are you using? The GUI quite clearly shows you
what folder on your hard drive that will be mounted as C: on the atari
(and allows you to mount more than just C: also)

By default it does mount an empty folder."

Greg tells Troed:

"Ok. I didn't realize WinSTon only read a drive from a specified folder.
GEMulator has spoiled me."

Chris Simon asks about connecting with STiK or STinG:

"It seems we're getting to the bottom of the problem that is causing
many of us headaches in trying to connect to Zetnet's new lines. They
are BT lines as opposed to Energis, and, quote, "BT do not guarantee
that PPP/PAP authentication will work".

It seems Stik and Sting do not handle CHAP - is there any
dialer/TCPIP stack that does? And that runs on vanilla TOS - and
presumably Stik/Sting compatible so that it will work with CAB and
Newsie?

Zetnet are keeping their 0845 Energis lines because they are aware
that there are many problems with the new lines, but it's unclear as
to whether the free phone number will be kept. If it goes, to be
replaced with a BT free phone number, we will have to pay full whack
for the account AND the phone charges - a little hard to swallow these
days. Are there any Atarians successfully using other ISPs?"

Steve Stupple tells Chris:

"Well you live and learn..

I didn't know it was down to the phone provider to dictate what protocol
to use. I know BT use pap and chap protocols for their dial-up services,
but I thought it was down to the ISP itself to chose the protocol!!

As far as i'm aware demon are fine with STiK n STinG!"

Chris tells Steve:

"Zetnet said that their own equipment will handle PPP/PAP and CHAP, but the qualifier was, as I mentioned, that BT themselves don't guarantee it on their virtual lines. What Zetnet are using must be a 'new generation' of BT lines????

Users on other platforms have had problems too - some have stopped working overnight. And I did actually have limited success with the numbers for a short period. Sounds like it's only a certain number of exchanges or routers or whatever that can handle PPP/PAP, so it's completely random which one you get..."

John Oakes asks:

"Is it possible for a email to wipe out my partition or receive bogus downloads on draconis?

Because yesterday that's what happened. I noticed while I was downloading a website to later view. I received a Blank recurring file without any chance of removing it (TOS 33). Then I got another load of duff files. I checked with my WenSuite to see if there was a similar problem, none as was there.

So I looked through Linux my Midnight Commander, to see what they were. To my amazement it was having trouble reading them as well, but I managed to remove them. So thinking the problem solved I returned to retrieve some emails via Marathon, which worked fine and okay in reading.

 But when I came to closing a folder, the whole setup went kaput leaving me looking at a odd file. Is it possible there is a chink in Draconis' armour, because it stems in that area only. Please take out your pipes and discuss."

Martin Byttebier tells John:

"I have Marathon somewhere on the HD but I never have used it for the simple reason that I never succeeded in making a connection to the POP3 mailserver.

Judging the terrible quality of Adamas I should say yes, it's very likely Marathon can do such devastating things.

Also it seems Wensuite has some troubles with making legible mails. Lots of words are split over two lines. A sentence stops somewhere in the middle of a line, the rest of the sentence goes further on another line. This all makes that it's rather hard to read your postings.
BTW: TOS -33 means file not found.

I should say put the whole Draconis thing in the dustbin and get a decent mails/news client. If you're only looking for a mail client, get Mymail or Amail. If you want a combined mail/newsreader gets Okami or ASH-mailer. All mentioned clients are far better then that marathon and Wensuite thingy."

Hallvard Tangeraas asks about using a CDROM on an ST:

"What exactly is needed in terms of software to be able to use an ST with a CD-ROM drive (SCSI)?

I've got both a GEsoft (without parity, but will build a parity generator) and an ICD Link II host adaptor, and HDdriver software for the hard disk, but I'm under the impression that something more is needed

for a CD-ROM drive.

I'm going to try things out to begin with using an old
2x Apple Macintosh CD-ROM drive (with caddy-loading), then buy a modern
one once I get that working.

By the way, are there specific drives that have to be used, or can any
SCSI CD-ROM drive be used with the ST?"

Paul Caillet tells Hallvard:

"...You also need ExtenDOS http://www.cyberus.ca/~anodyne/

I'm using a MATSHITA CR-504-J external CD-ROM x12, and that's work very well
with The Link 2 (ICD) and ICD SCSI Link Utilities or HD Driver, and of
course ExtenDOS ..."

Dr. Uwe Seimet (author of HD Driver, in case you didn't already know) tells
Hallvard:

"Or SPIN!: http://www.muenster.de/~reschke/soft.html [as the CD ROM driver
software]."

Steve Sweet adds:

"Use the Link II, I never managed to get my GE board to talk to anything but
drive 0.

Nothing else needed but software, I recommend HD-driver and Extendos."

Hallvard tells everyone who answered:

"Oh <frown>

I was hoping to keep my ICD Link II for a backup machine, and use the
GEsoft inside my 19" rack STe which I've just posted about in the
"comp.sys.atari.st.tech" newsgroup, but I guess the other way round will
work just as well (so long as I turn off parity from the hard disk as the
GEsoft doesn't support parity).

By the way, is parity recommended to be switched ON if the host adapter
supports it, or do things work just as well without?"

David Bolt tells Hallvard:

"The GEsoft will work. I had an old NEC 3 speed connected to it while
using Spin 0.34, Magic 5, HDDriver 7 and SCSIDRV 5.02 (maybe from CBHD,
can't remember for certain). I had parity was disabled on the CD (it had
a jumper to do so :) and it worked just fine.

In my situation it worked without parity."

Hallvard tells David:

"That's probably the same GEsoft adapter I bought from you about a year
or two back! :-)

I've been in touch with Roger Burrows at Anodyne software (nice guy!)
asking about their "ExtenDOS" CD-ROM driver software, and he tells me

that the GEsoft adaptor is most likely a clone of the original Atari
host adaptor and only supports the most basic commands.

He added that it will drive a CD-ROM drive, but only at the most basic
level (i.e. reading data), but probably not stuff like extracting audio
data, control of audio CDs, accessing specific sessions of multi-session
CDs etc.

So I guess this means I'll be using the ICD Link II for my 19" rack
Atari where I'll be installing a CD-ROM drive among other things (see my
separate thread in 'comp.sys.atari.st.tech' (19" rack mounting an STe)
and the GEsoft for my backup machine since it's more than good enough
for connecting a hard disk etc."

David tells Hallvard:

"...Methinks you've mistaken me for someone else because I've not
sold my adapter.

It should be capable of doing some very basic control of the drive,
enough to play the audio tracks, but couldn't get it to extract audio
tracks or access multi-session CDs. The latter was a pain as I burnt a
couple of CDs with all my ST software, in 2 or 3 sessions, and it could
only handle the first session.

I'm not sure if this was a software or hardware limitation since I don't
know if the drive could read multi-session discs, or if it was a
limitation imposed by Spin or the adapter. Since I no longer have an ST,
nor the CD to test it, I can't check to see just what was the
limitation."

John Garone asks about upgrading the memory in his Falcon:

"I'm curious to know of the availability and cost of a 14 meg RAM card
for the Falcon MKI and can they be bought new? I have the "Gizmo" in there
now but it's bad for the Phantom SE. In case anyone has info on it, the
cards that I CAN'T use are:

- GIZMO
- Falcon WINGS
- original Atari 14MB RAM card
- any other card with 4x4MB short SIMMs

So the suggested solution is a modern 14MB RAM card with 72pin SIMM?"

Stephen Moss tells John:

"Try Atari Workshop (http://www.atari-workshop.co.uk) they sell a Falcon
upgrade board that requires 1 x 16Mb SIMM, unfortunately you have to source
your own SIMM and at £49.95 + VAT it is a tad expensive."

Joshua Kaijankoski adds:

"I got my RAM from Wizztronics. They sell a Memory card that takes 72pin
simms. It works great. They also sell a 16Mb simm as well. For prices, go to
www.wizztronics.com"

Milton Horst asks about color modes on his Milan:

"I switched my Milan over to 64K color mode last week.
Most applications work fine, but a couple now display solid black.
One is the MENU_UHR that comes with MagiC, but ran fine with Mint
before in 256-color mode. (FYI, this program puts the date and time
into the menu bar). The other problem application is GEM Ghostscript
(GEMGS13). When the window opened to display a PDF file, the
contents were solid black. Does anyone know the cause, and hopefully
a cure, for this? I'd hate to have to switch back to 256-color mode
every time I need to view a PDF file..."

Martin Byttebier tells Milton:

"If you're using MiNT use the excellent taskbar. Taskbar can display
time and date in whatever color mode you use..

I'm afraid Ghostscript runs only in 256 color mode."

Well friends and neighbors, that's it for this time around. Tune in again next

week, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying
when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

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->In This Week's Gaming Section - JagFest 2K2 Planning! Max Payne!
   """"""""""""""""""""""""""""""   Cyberpunks News! New Atari Poll!
                                     Video Game Violence Ratings Lenient?!
                                     And much more!

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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!
   """""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""

            Sega Delivers an Unprecedented Artificial Intelligence
                System With Floigan Brothers for Sega Dreamcast

            New Characters Blur the Line Between Cartoons and Video
               Games in This Highly Interactive Episodic Adventure

Whoever thought having a brother could be so much fun? Sega of America
announced the release of Visual Concepts' ''Floigan Bros.: Moigle's Secret
Project" for the 128-bit, Internet-ready Sega Dreamcast video game
console. By entering the madcap and cartoony world of Hoigle and Moigle
Floigan, gamers can play more than a dozen exciting mini-games and
challenging puzzles to help Moigle complete his secret project and
ultimately save the brothers' junkyard from the evil Baron Malodorous.

State-of-the-art animation techniques and ground-breaking artificial
intelligence (AI) technology deliver an innovative gameplay experience by
challenging players to control Moigle's emotions.

In ''Floigan Bros.," players become the quick-witted Hoigle Floigan to
help large-and-lovable brother, Moigle Floigan accomplish a variety of
tasks key to completing his secret project. Moigle's AI gives him a full
range of human emotions which allows him to express anger, sadness,
happiness and fear. As Hoigle, players manipulate Moigle's emotions in a
series of cause-and-effect scenarios. For example, Hoigle may provoke
Moigle to ''cry a river" -- literally! -- to raise a floating bridge,
allowing the brothers to successfully cross and obtain one of the secret
project's missing pieces.

''Sega's development teams continue to set new standards for game creation,
this time with the combination of ground-breaking AI technology and
entertaining animation that makes Floigan Brothers stand out from the
pack," said John Golden, director of product marketing, Sega of America.

Within the 13 areas of the brothers' junkyard, Hoigle and Moigle must work
both cooperatively and competitively in more than a dozen mini-games such
as playing ''High Five" or ''Hide and Seek." Also, as Hoigle, players
''teach" Moigle quirky abilities such as playing ''tag" or performing
tricks on his yo-yo. Everything Moigle learns makes him unique and Moigles
with different ''characteristics" may then be traded over the Internet,
extending the overall gaming experience.

The Floigan brothers' world is highly interactive and designed in the same
surreal, whimsical fashion you'd expect from a Saturday morning cartoon.
Bright images and attention to detail make Hoigle and Moigle's world truly
come to life.

Sega will keep the adventure fresh and exciting by offering monthly
downloadable game elements, such as cool holiday costumes and special
mini-games.

Visual Concepts is one of Sega's many excellent exclusive development
studios. Aside from ''Floigan Bros.," they are also the creative talent
behind the best-selling and award-winning Dreamcast titles ''Sega
Sports NFL 2K1" and ''Sega Sports NBA 2K1."

''Floigan Brothers" is rated ''E" for ''Everyone" and is now available
at retail stores nationwide or at www.sega.com for $19.95.

                    Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. Announces
                         Max Payne Coming to Console Systems

                    PlayStation2 Computer Entertainment System and
                    Xbox Video Game System Versions in Development
                     Strong Initial Sell-through for Max Payne PC

Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. announced that its Rockstar Games
subsidiary will be bringing Max Payne, which was developed for the PC by
Remedy Entertainment and produced by 3D Realms, to the PlayStation2 and
Xbox video game system from Microsoft this Fall.

Since its initial shipment on PC a week ago, Max Payne has already debuted

as the number 1 selling PC game in the U.K., Germany and other major European markets. Domestically, while not yet officially ranked, the Company has been very pleased with what to date has been record first week North American sell-through for a Take-Two PC product in many major retail accounts.

The Xbox version of Max Payne is in development at the Company's Vienna based Neo Software development studio, while the PlayStation 2 version is being developed at the Company's Toronto based Rockstar Canada studio.

Kelly Sumner, Chief Executive Officer, said, ''To date, Max Payne has represented the largest critical and sell-through success Take-Two has ever had on the PC. We are very pleased to leverage the successful Max Payne brand franchise by releasing video game console versions of the product this Fall."

U.S. Study: Video Game Ratings Too Easy on Violence

Roughly three out of five video games rated suitable for children as young as 6 reward players for injuring or killing characters, researchers who surveyed some of the games said on Tuesday.

''Physicians and parents should understand that popular E-rated video games may be a source of exposure to violence that rewards them for violent actions," said the report published in this week's issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association.

An E-rating is the video game world's equivalent of a G-rated movie, having ''content suitable for persons aged six and older," the report said.

According to researchers from the Harvard School of Public Health, the Entertainment Software Rating Board, a panel created in 1994 to evaluate video games for children, is supposed to give its ''E" rating to games containing minimal violence, but they said many such games contained a significant level of violence.

''With all of the questions about the impact of violence in video games on children, this is the first study to our knowledge to quantify the amount of violence in E-rated video games and to show that many E-rated video games do involve violence, killing and the use of weapons in the normal course of play," study authors Kimberly Thompson and Kevin Haninger wrote.

The ratings board also uses content descriptions to warn parents about violent games.

The pervasiveness of video games was illustrated in a 1999 Kaiser Family Foundation study that found 70 percent of American children aged 2 to 18 lived in homes that had at least one video game player, and one-third had it in their bedrooms.

After compiling a list of 672 E-rated games, researchers at the Harvard Center for Risk Analysis played 55 of them and then analyzed videotape recordings of their play to assess the amount of violence in each game.

The researchers found 35 of the 55 sampled E-rated games depicted intentional acts of violence ranging from 1.5 percent of the time in a hockey game to 91 percent of the time in an action game. Twenty-seven of

the games also depicted deaths from violence.

``Action and shooting games led to the largest numbers of deaths from
violent acts, and we found a significant correlation between the proportion
of violent game play and the number of deaths per minute of play," the
report said.

The researchers called for more consistent ratings and content descriptions
to educate parents about the nature of violent content in video games.

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->A-ONE Gaming Online   -   Online Users Growl & Purr!
   """""""""""""""""""""

                      Cyberpunks Press Release

Long-time Atari 2600 supporter Cyberpunks Entertainment recently announced
their donation of 100 "Stella Gets a New Brain" CDs to accompany the
pending release of Schell's Electronics' Cuttle Cart for the Atari 2600.

"It makes sense that a next-generation Supercharger-like device for
the 2600 be released with the Supercharger games," commented Glenn
Saunders, owner of Cyberpunks Entertainment. "Because of the Cuttle
Cart's high manufacturing costs and corresponding high price,
donating the Stella CDs gives consumers more value at the same price."

"It's very generous of Cyberpunks Entertainment to donate these CDs
for distribution with the Cuttle Cart. Their inclusion really
completes the Cuttle Cart package by providing a wealth of high
quality games ready for immediate play," commented Chad Schell, owner
of Schell's Electronics and designer of the Cuttle Cart. "Making the
Cuttle Cart more attractive to consumers is very important in making
the Cuttle Cart an effective means of distributing new games by
increasing the number of units sold, and thus increasing the
distribution base for new games. This donation is just another
example of the Cyberpunk's continuing efforts to support and preserve
the Atari 2600."

The Cuttle Cart is a device that allows one to load games into an
Atari 2600 using an audio interface such as a CD player, similar to
(and compatible with) the Starpath Supercharger, but also expanded to
support all known cartridge sizes and formats. It makes a great
development tool and distribution medium for new games, which can be
created using freely available development tools. Finally you can
play all those prototypes, homebrew games, and extremely rare titles
on the real 2600 just like they're intended to be played.

"Stella Gets a New Brain" is a multi-session audio CD/CD-ROM
containing all the released (and unreleased) Starpath Supercharger
titles such as "Communist Mutants from Space" and "Escape From the
Mindmaster", as well as the best of recent homebrew titles
like "Oystron". Other features include the song "Atari 2600" by the

band Splitsville, a data portion containing a wealth of technical
material on the 2600 and the Supercharger, with a large number of
images of scanned materials, and a deluxe full-size booklet compiling
the Starpath manuals. The CD has a retail value of $20 and is sold
mail-order at the company website (see below).

Cyberpunks Entertainment are digital archaeologists for the Atari 2600.
Please visit the company web site at http://cyberpunks.uni.cc for
updates.

Schell's Electronics is a producer of development systems for classic
video game consoles like the Atari 2600 and the Mattel Intellivision.
For more information see their web site at
http://www.schells.com.

Jagfest 2k2 Being Planned

Jagfest 2002 planning has begun:

First:I have learned that fest 2k2 is being planned for St. Louis,MO.

Second,I have also learned that this fest will be a 2 day event
tentative dates are Friday July 12th,2002 and Saturday July 13th, 2002

For more information go to the following sites:

http://www.omcgames.com
http://www.ataritimes.com/
http://www.geocities.com/atarivideoclub/Fest2001/fest2k1.html

James Garvin of OMC games is also taking down names of possible attendees
for fest 2k2

If you think you can make it for a St. Louis fest, e-mail James
at OMC@omcgames.com : subject Jagfest 2002

(also don't forget to attend the Jagfest 2002 planning chats
every Thursday night at Atari Times chat at 8pm eastern)

Btw: while visiting AVC's fest site be sure to enter
AVC's Beat the Champ competition (details can be found at
AVC's fest site)

Dan Iacovelli

New Poll For Atari

Enter your vote today! A new poll has been created for the
atari group:

Would you buy new games produced in 2001
and beyond for...

(please select all that apply)

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      o Atari 2600
      o Atari 5200
      o Atari 7800
      o Atari Computers (8-bit, etc.)
      o Atari Jaguar
      o Atari Lynx
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To vote, please visit the following web page:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/atari/polls

Note: Please do not reply to this message. Poll votes are
not collected via email. To vote, you must go to the Yahoo! Groups
web site listed above.

Thanks!

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                        A-ONE's Headline News
                 The Latest in Computer Technology News
                     Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

             US Court Rejects Microsoft, Government Requests

A federal appeals court on Thursday rejected Microsoft's request to
re-examine part of its ruling in the landmark antitrust case against the
firm and also declined to speed the case's passage back to a lower court, a
move sought by the U.S. government.

The decision leaves the case on schedule to return to the U.S. District
Court late next week unless Microsoft decides to appeal to the Supreme
Court, one option under consideration.

``We continue to review our options with regard to Supreme Court review,"
said Microsoft spokesman Jim Desler.

Microsoft had asked the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia
on July 18 to re-hear a portion of the ruling that found the company
illegally ``commingled" computer code of its Internet Explorer browser and
the Windows operating system to protect its monopoly power.

The timing for moving the case could be crucial for Microsoft, which is due
to roll out its new Windows XP operating system, jam-packed with new
features, in October.

Opposing Microsoft, government prosecutors had argued that the case should
be moved quickly in the wake of a June 28 appeals court ruling that
Microsoft abused its monopoly in the market for personal computer operating
systems.

The same appeals court refused the government's request to accelerate the case back to the lower court.

There, a new district court judge will be named to re-examine whether Microsoft illegally tied its Internet Explorer browser into the Windows operating system and will consider what remedies should be applied to prevent future violations of antitrust law.

Microsoft executives have repeatedly said they want to move the case quickly and are open to settlement talks.

But some antitrust experts think Microsoft's request for a re-hearing -- and possible request for Supreme Court consideration -- is aimed at delaying any sanctions until after the release of Windows XP.

``They appear interested in delaying the remedy proceedings until they get their new product on the market," said Mark Schecter, an attorney with Howrey Simon Arnold & White.

In denying Microsoft's petition for a rehearing, the appeals court said nothing in its opinion was ``intended to preclude the District Court's consideration of remedy issues."

Schecter said he took that to mean that Microsoft could raise during the remedy phase its concerns that restrictions on commingling of computer code would harm its ability to produce innovative products.

A U.S. Department of Justice spokeswoman welcomed the court's denial of Microsoft's request, a sentiment shared by a spokesman for the attorney general of Iowa, one of the leading states supporting the government's case.

                    Bluelight Drops Free Web Service

Less than a week after Kmart Corp. announced it would buy out its online retail partner, BlueLight.com, the e-tailer said Monday it would discontinue offering free Internet service to consumers.

BlueLight.com said in a release that the free service, called BlueLight Basic, would end August 29, replaced by BlueLight Unlimited, which started Monday. BlueLight Basic users had received 12 hours of free Web access per month.

BlueLight Unlimited will cost $8.95 a month for unlimited Internet usage. Those who sign up prior to Sept. 1 will be given discounted service at $6.95 a month for the first three months.

Those who were signed up for the Premium level of service at $9.95 a month, which offered 100 hours of Internet access monthly, were automatically transferred to the Unlimited service.

In March, BlueLight.com dropped its unlimited free service in March and opted for a two-tiered approach that offered more limited free service.

While BlueLight.com is ending its free Internet service, customers who purchase non-clearance items over the Web site can earn free Web time, the company said.

The move to end the free service was necessitated by diminishing ad revenue, Bluelight.com spokesman Dave Karraker said Monday.

''The ad revenue dried up, and we just couldn't support the original business model," Karraker said.

BlueLight.com is an independent company based in San Francisco with Kmart as a majority stockholder. It was formed in 1999.

Last week the Troy-based discount retailer said it would buy the remaining shares of Bluelight.com it already does not own. The move would have to be approved by BlueLight.com shareholders.

In June, its rival, Walmart.com, announced that it would finally roll out its own Internet service this fall with America Online, offering unlimited access for less than $10 a month.

NetZero Cuts Staff, Free Services

NetZero Inc., one of the few remaining providers of free Internet access, is slashing staff, selling a subsidiary, and reducing its free service to save money, company officials said Thursday.

In another sign that its business model isn't working, the Westlake Village-based company has eliminated 66 positions and will reduce the number of free hours available to basic service customers from 40 to 10 a month, effective Oct. 1.

It also sold subsidiary RocketCash, an e-commerce company best known for its partnership with the Sprite soda brand. RocketCash has 27 employees and cost NetZero several million dollars a year to operate.

The sale closed Wednesday, but neither the name of the buyer nor the terms of the deal were disclosed.

''If we have a business tangential to our core business, and if we are spending a lot of time or effort on that, this market will not give us credit for that," NetZero chief executive Mark Goldston said. ''We can't afford the diversion."

The 66 layoffs at NetZero and the sale of RocketCash resulted in a 26 percent overall reduction in staffing. With the new layoffs, the company now employs 270 workers.

With the news, shares of NetZero rose 5 cents to close at 65 cents a share on Thursday.

Goldston said NetZero wanted to make the cost-cutting moves before its merger with New York-based Juno Online Services in a deal that will create the world's second-largest Internet service provider behind AOL. NetZero hopes to close the stock deal by year end.

Goldston declined to estimate how much the changes might save his money-losing company, saying only that it will be in the millions of dollars.

The slashing of service hours will affect about 30 percent of the company's free-access customers, Goldston said. The goal is to move people from free service to a ''Platinum" plan that costs $9.95 a month.

About 3.4 million people used NetZero services in June, but only about 210,000 were billable subscribers.

Analysts described the NetZero changes as part of a larger move away from free Internet service. When the firm opened nearly four years ago, it was the first to offer free Web access to customers willing to share personal information and look at targeted advertising.

Last month, e-tailer BlueLight.com of San Francisco said it would discontinue its free Internet service.

Free access companies simply have not been able to make the advertising-based model pay, said David Smith, vice president of Internet strategy at Gartner Inc. in Stamford, Conn.

''The free lunch is over," he said. ''See if those 10 free hours are there six months from now."

Online Music Legislation Would Promote Competition

Legislation unveiled on Friday aims to rewrite music licensing and copyright laws to promote competition among online music service distributors and make it easier to buy and sell digital songs.

Major music companies that recently entered ventures with other firms to distribute music over the Internet would have to make the same terms available to independent online music distributors under the bill sponsored by Republican Rep. Chris Cannon of Utah and Rep. Rick Boucher, a Virginia Democrat.

Boucher said the legislation did not go as far as the compulsory licensing sought by Napster, the online song-swapping service whose royalty-free system generated industry lawsuits and charges of piracy.

''I think a compulsory license should only be applied as an absolute last resort," Boucher said, describing the legislation as ''narrow" intervention to encourage market competition.

Congress this year held a series of hearings to look at the rapidly evolving digital music industry. During the hearings, online music industry executives said new laws were necessary to encourage legitimate Internet music services.

The Music Online Competition Act (MOCA) would also allow users to make backup copies of legally acquired music files as protection against a computer crash or similar technical glitch.

Online distributors would be able to make multiple in-house recordings, called ephemeral copies, which are necessary for efficient distribution of music online via different file formats.

Cannon and Boucher Lawmakers consulted the recording industry and software companies to draft the bill. They tried to address technical industry

complaints about copyright laws, as well as broader concerns about competition after the major labels teamed up this spring with other companies to provide music online.

''This bill has something for everyone, and it also has a provision that will give various members of the music industry heartburn," Cannon said.

Online music ventures have been announced by several groups of major entertainment companies.

Vivendi Universal and Sony Corp. are working together, as are AOL Time Warner Inc., EMI Group Plc and Bertelsmann AG's.

Canon envisions a competitive market where consumers pay a moderate sum, like $5 to $10 each month, to use online music swapping sites like Napster.

MOCA's sponsors said the U.S. House of Representatives would move quickly to hold hearings on the legislation in the fall, when public debate over licensing issues could prove decisive.

MOCA also eliminates a legal requirement forcing companies to get clear publishing rights with songwriters directly, instead allowing them to clear it with the Copyright Office.

And it addresses a legal dispute between songwriters and recording companies over royalty payments by channeling the payments directly to the artists, who are currently paid by the companies.

The legislation has the support of the Digital Media Association, an 65-member organization representing online video and audio companies, as well as Napster, which said the bill for offered needed direction for the embattled industry.

''When the legislative process is completed, we hope that MOCA will be the cup of coffee that this nascent industry sorely needs," said Manus Cooney, Napster's vice president for corporate and public policy development.

Intel Unveils New Pentium III Chips for Laptops

No. 1 chipmaker Intel Corp. on Monday introduced five laptop microprocessors that it said will boost performance, cut power use, and lengthen battery life, as competition heats up with upstart chip designer Transmeta Corp. and Advanced Micro Devices Inc.

Frank Spindler, Intel's executive vice president and general manager of its Mobile Platforms Group, said the launch of the company's Pentium III processor-M products represents a "milestone in mobile computing" as the company seeks to make chips powerful and dynamic enough for laptops to allow users to use them for both computing and entertainment purposes.

The mobile Pentium III processor-M will provide almost a 50 percent gain in performance on data-intensive applications over the previous mobile Intel Premium III processor, and the new processor supports Intel technology that automatically switches laptop power modes, providing for more energy-efficient mobile PCs, Intel said.

Intel said its new processor will be available in mobile PCs made by Acer

America Corp., Compaq Computer Corp., Dell Computer Corp., Fujitsu Corp., Gateway Inc., Hewlett-Packard Co., IBM Corp., NEC Corp., Sony Corp., and Toshiba America Information Systems Inc.

Rival Advanced Micro Devices said during its second-quarter conference call that it is aiming for a 50 percent share of the U.S. retail market for laptop computers and Transmeta has succeeded in convincing nearly every major Japanese laptop maker to use Transmeta's Crusoe chip in some of its laptop PCs. But Transmeta has yet to break into the U.S. market.

Santa Clara, California-based Intel also launched a new chipset -- which works with the microprocessor to help run the computer -- that it said will allow laptop-makers to design better performing notebooks that are thinner, lighter, and have longer battery life than those now available.

The chips are made using so-called 0.13 micron process technology, in which the circuitry lines are thinner than those in chips made using 0.18 technology. This newer process means Intel gets more chips from a single silicon wafer and also more transistors can be crammed onto a single chip, boosting performance, and also cutting power use.

The chips run at up to 1.13 Gigahertz, Intel said, and are available today in large quantities. Intel said that the 0.13 micron Pentium III chips use 40 percent less power and are as much as 20 percent faster than the previous 0.18 micron process.

Chips made with 0.13 micron technology contain circuitry that is about 1/1000th the width of a human hair.

OmniWeb 4.0.3 Released

The Omni Group has updated their native Web browser for Mac OS X, OmniWeb, to version 4.0.3. The update is available from Omni Group's Web site for download.

This update includes many fixes and enhancements including language support for Japanese, Danish, Swedish, French and German. The new version also fixed some issues with the Character Encodings popup menu; fixed some issues with HTTP Accept-Language and Accept-Charset headers; fixed a bug in JavaScript error reporting; and may others. A full list of changes can be found on the Web site.

OmniWeb was developed using Cocoa, Apple's object oriented programming framework. The Omni Group said that OmniWeb leverages many of the core technologies of Mac OS X, including symmetric multiprocessing, multithreading and the Quartz graphics display engine. OmniWeb also supports the Aqua interface, AppleScript, ColorSync and other Mac OS X features.

OmniWeb also supports a wide variety of Internet standards as well, including HTML 4.0, JavaScript, Java 2, QuickTime, Flash, Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) Level 1, Secure Sockets Layer, and more.

House Panel Won't Consider Internet Sales-Tax Bill

A House of Representatives panel said on Wednesday that it would press ahead with plans to extend a ban on Internet-specific taxes, while sidestepping controversial efforts that could allow states to tax online commerce.

The move was seen as a blow to supporters of the sales-tax effort, who have tried to tie the two issues together.

The House Judiciary subcommittee on commercial and administrative law released a schedule showing plans to consider two bills on Thursday that would extend the current moratorium on Internet access taxes and other Internet-specific taxes, due to expire in October.

One bill would extend the moratorium for five years, while another would make it permanent.

Neither bill addresses a more divisive issue: whether states should be encouraged to simplify their sales-tax codes to enable them to tax online commerce.

Advocates of the sales-tax proposal scrambled on Wednesday afternoon to cobble together an amendment that would require Congress to allow states to tax e-commerce if enough of them simplified their sales-tax codes.

``We need the moratorium extension, but I think both of these things have to be dealt with at the same time," said North Carolina Representative Mel Watt, the subcommittee's top Democrat.

``I think it's important to put it out there so we can start to assess where people are on this," Watt said.

Under a 1992 Supreme Court decision, states cannot require out-of-state retailers such as catalog companies to collect sales taxes unless they have a physical presence in the state.

Many state and local officials fear a loss of revenues as constituents increasingly shop online, while Internet retailers say it would be impossible to comply with the maze of state and local tax codes across the United States.

A coalition of states is in the process of simplifying their tax codes with the hope that Congress would then allow them to collect sales taxes on remote sellers.

While several committees in both the House and the Senate have held hearings on the issue, the commercial and administrative law subcommittee is the first to take action.

Lisa Cowell, executive director of the retail group E-Fairness Coaction, said Watt's amendment could find significant support among other subcommittee members.

``I think that if Congressman Barr will allow a vote ... there will be tremendous sympathy to pass it," Cowell said.

But Bob Barr, who chairs the subcommittee, could defeat his amendment without a vote if it is found to be not relevant to the bill at hand.

Barr, a Georgia Republican, was not available for comment.

In the Senate, negotiators have failed so far to reach a compromise on two rival bills.

Experts on the issue testified Thursday morning before the Senate Finance Committee, which together with the Commerce Committee can claim jurisdiction.

New Jersey Case Tests Computer Surveillance Use

In a case that privacy advocates say smacks of Big Brother, a U.S. judge on Monday heard a defense motion to suppress evidence against an alleged mobster gathered by a high-tech computer snooping technique.

Before ruling, U.S. District Court Judge Nicholas Politan gave attorneys for alleged mobster Nicodemo Scarfo Jr. until Wednesday to file supplemental information on their motion to order the FBI to reveal more details of the monitoring system. The government has until Friday to respond.

Scarfo, son of imprisoned mobster ''Little Nicky" Scarfo, is charged with running illegal gambling and loan-sharking operations for the Gambino crime family.

The case could set an important precedent for computer privacy issues, said David Sobel, general counsel for the Washington, D.C.-based Electronic Privacy Information Center.

''It addresses which rules should apply to hi-tech law enforcement investigations and whether law enforcement can install secret devices in computers in our homes and offices," Sobel said.

Attorneys in the case, the first in the United States in which federal agents installed a secret surveillance system in a personal computer system under search warrant and the first to be tested in U.S. courts, are under a gag order.

The FBI recorded virtually every keystroke made on Scarfo's computer at his Belleville, New Jersey, business, including passwords. Whether its system is hardware or software is unknown, thus the motion to reveal its makeup so defense attorneys can have it analyzed and make a case to suppress the evidence it gathered.

The Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution guarantees citizens security against unreasonable searches and seizures.

''By its nature it's surreptitious and far more invasive than traditional search warrants," with which officials can search specific areas or for specific items, Sobel said. ''Given how much we're all storing on computers, this raises serious issues because increasingly the government will be interested in that information."

The U.S. Supreme Court threw out a case last month in which police gathered evidence using a thermal imaging device.

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